AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-25. Canceled)

Claim 26. (Currently Amended) A self-ballasted fluorescent lamp comprising:

an arc tube formed by parallely arranging a plurality of U-shaped bent bulbs in such a manner that the maximum width of the bulbs ranges from about 32 mm to about 42 mm, each of which has a bent portion and straight portions;

a distance w1 between the two straight portions of each U-shaped bent bulb being so set as to be nearly identical to a distance w2 between each straight portion of each U-shaped bent bulb that is adjacent to said straight portion;

said distances wl, w2 being respectively limited in the range from about 1 mm to about 5 mm;

a cover including a base that is adapted to permit said ~~are~~ arc tube to be attached thereto;

a lighting circuit which includes a circuit board having the maximum width ranging up to 1.2 tames the maximum width of the arc tube, said maximum width of the arc tube being the dimension along which the U-shaped bent bulbs are arranged; and

said lighting circuit contained in the cover in such a manner that the circuit board is positioned with one of its sides facing all the ends of the straight portions of the ~~are~~ arc tube.

Claim 27. (Currently Amended) A self-ballasted fluorescent lamp, as in claim 26, wherein: ~~The~~ the U-shaped bent bulbs ~~has~~ have an outer tube diameter ranging from about 8 mm to about 11 mm.

Claim 28. (Currently Amended) A self-ballasted fluorescent lamp, as in claim 26, wherein: the U-shaped bent bulbs of the ~~are~~ arc tube are arranged in such a manner that the cross sections of the U-shaped bent bulbs give the appearance of a triangle.

Claim 29. (Allowed) A self-ballasted fluorescent lamp, as in claim 26, wherein:

said lighting circuit includes a half-bridge type inverter main circuit having at least a pair of transistors consisting of an N-channel transistor and a P-channel transistor, which are connected in series with each other to an input power supply and serve as the main switching element for generating a high frequency voltage;

said lighting circuit further includes a ballast choke connected to the main inverter main circuit so as to light the arc tube in stable conditions; and;

said lighting circuit further includes a control means which has a secondary winding magnetically connected to the ballast choke and shared by the N-channel transistor and the P-channel transistor so that the control means serves to control the transistors by means of the secondary winding.

Claim 30. (Allowed) A luminaire including a self-ballasted fluorescent lamp as in claim 26.